i) Forest (Conservation) Act 1980, has been enacted to regulate the diversion of forest land for non forestry purposes.

ii) Cooperation of local people is being solicited through Joint Forest Management Committees to manage and protect the forests.

iii) Number of Schemes are being implemented to protect and manage the existing forests.

iv) Management of forest area under the control of State Forest Department is done according to the prescriptions of the Working Plans.

Danger to environment due to garbage of vam organics

†1374. SHRI D.P. YADAV: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Government are aware of the fact that discharge being released from the vam organics (Jubiliant Chemicals) Gajraula, Uttar Pradesh is destroying the standing crops of the farmers and damaging the trees in the surrounding areas and thereby causing a serious danger to the environment; and

(b) if so, the action taken by Government and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV): (a) and (b) A complaint relating to effect of gaseous emissions from M/s Vam Organics (now known as M/s Jubiliant Organics), Gajraula, Uttar Pradesh, on mango orchard and crops was received. M/s Vam organics have now installed scrubbers in its sulphuric acid plant for control of sulphur dioxide emissions.

Loss due to forest fire

1375. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of report that 'Half of forest area fire-prone' which appeared in the media recenly;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details including action taken on above report;

(c) whether there is an annual loss of Rs. 4,400 million due to forest fire;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) if not, the actual annual loss due to forest fire for the last three years, State-wise and year-wise?

(f) the details of fire prone area of forest, State-wise;

(g) whether there is any national action plan for control and management of forest fires; and

(h) if so, the details of implementation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV): (a) and (b) Some reports regarding forest fires which have appeared in the media have come to the notice. The specific report under reference has not come to the notice of the Ministry. However, it is true that nearly half of forest area is fire prone and Ministry is seized of the problem.

(c) to (e) As per the Ministry's estimate the annual loss on account of forest fire in the country is around Rs. 570 Crores. This does not include the loss caused by forest fires to biodiversity and habitat, soil fertility, forest regeneration etc.

(f) As per the Forest Survey of India report 1995, 8.9% of the total inventoried forest area was found to be subjected to frequent fires whereas 44.2% of inventoried forest area was found to be subjected to occasional fires. No State-wise details covering the entire area are available.

(g) National Master Plan for control and management of forest fires has been prepared.

(h) Financial assistance is being provided to the State Governments to take effective measures to prevent and control forest fires.